

# DISTINGUISHED MEMBER OF THE SPECIAL FORCES REGIMENT

## MAJOR GEORGE PETRIE

Inducted September 2010



Major George Petrie entered the U.S. Army as a private on June 22, 1958. After attending Basic and Advanced Infantry Combat Training, he was assigned to the 319th Airborne Field Artillery, 82nd Airborne Division in Fort Bragg, North Carolina. In 1962, Major Petrie graduated from the Special Forces Communications Course as Honor Graduate and was assigned to the 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne) as an A-Team Senior Radio Supervisor. When 8th Special Group (Airborne) was stood up at Fort Gulick, Panama Canal Zone, Major Petrie transferred to the new unit. Over the next three years, he attended Scuba and Underwater Demolitions School and Spanish Language School. In 1967 Major Petrie returned to 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), now stationed in the Republic of Vietnam, as a Team Sergeant and Company Commander of a mobile guerilla force. When he returned to Fort Bragg after his year tour, Major Petrie was assigned first to 3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne), and later 6th Special Forces Group (Airborne). During this time, he graduated from the Special Forces Operations and Intelligence Course as Distinguished Honor Graduate and also completed the Special Forces Intelligence Analyst Course.

In 1970, Major Petrie received a Direct Commission to First Lieutenant. After completing the Infantry Officers Basic Course at Fort Benning, Georgia, he was chosen to participate in Operation Ivory Coast, the mission to rescue Americans held prisoners in the Son Tay prison of war camp in North Vietnam. Major Petrie, part of the Assault Team "Blue Boy," was the first raider to hit the ground during the assault on the camp.

Major Petrie returned to the Republic of Vietnam in 1971, ultimately becoming Company Commander of Company A, 1st Battalion, 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne) known as the "George Dickel Gang." He returned stateside for the Infantry Officers Advanced Course where he was the Honor Graduate. His next assignment was with the Joint Casualty Resolution Center in Thailand. His assignment was as an Operations Officer, Field Investigator, Corps Desk Officer in Saigon before becoming an Action Officer in the U.S. Embassy Defense Attaché Office, Saigon, serving as a member of the Special Planning Group for the Evacuation of Saigon. Between 1975 and 1976, Major Petrie was assigned to the 25th Infantry Division in Hawaii. Between 1976 and 1980, remaining in Hawaii, he was again assigned to the Joint Casualty Resolution Center with an additional duty as the Special Operations Division Escape and Evasion Officer, U.S. Pacific Command, a post he would also hold in Korea before retiring from Active Duty on May 31, 1980.

Major Petrie's numerous awards include: Silver Star with Oak Leaf Cluster (OLC), Legion of Merit, Bronze Star w/ "V" Device and OLC, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal, Purple Heart with OLC, Army Commendation Medal with "V" Device and 3 OLCs, Joint Service Commendation Medal w/ 3 Award Devices, Navy Commendation Medal w/ Combat "V" Device, Army Good Conduct Medal w/ 3 Award Devices, National Defense Service Medal with Bronze Service Star, Army Forces Expeditionary Medal w/ 2 Bronze Service Stars, Vietnam Service Medal w/ Arrowhead Devices, Korean Defense Service Medal, Humanitarian Service Medal w/ #3, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, Army Overseas Service Ribbon w/ #6, Vietnam Cross of Gallantry w/ Gold, Silver, and Bronze Stars, Vietnam Honor Medal 1st Class, Vietnam Wound Medal, Vietnam Civic Action Medal (1st Class), Vietnam Campaign Medal w/ "60" Device, Inter-American Peace Force Medal, Presidential Unit Citation, Valorous Unit Citation, Meritorious Unit Citation with OLC, Vietnam Cross of Gallantry Unit Citation, Vietnam Civic Action Unit Citation, RVN Armed Forces Honor Medal 1st Class, RVN Civil Action 1st Class w/ Palm, RVN Staff Service Medal 1st Class, RVN Campaign Medal w/ "60" Device, Presidential Unit Citation w/ OLC, Valorous Unit Citation, Meritorious Unit Citation w/ OLC, RVN Civil Action Unit Citation w/ Palm, RVN Cross of Gallantry Unit Citation w/ Palm. His badges include: Combat Infantryman's Badge, Jungle Warfare Expert Patch, Master Parachutist Badge with Bronze Combat Jump Star, Pathfinder Badge, Scuba Badge, Special Forces Tab, RVN Master Parachute Badge, Republic of Korea Master Parachute Badge, Thailand Master Parachute Badge w/ Fourragère.

In retirement Major Petrie has volunteered for several organizations. He has been President of the Special Forces Association, Chapter 31, for the past 18 years and has worked with Vet-to-Vet, Operation "Safe Refuge," and the Chapter 31's Jimmy Dean Scholarship Fund. He is a recipient of the Gold St. Phillip Neri Award.